

Brothers in Aid – Brothers in Arms

Inspired by his Mother, Army Reservists donates blood while his brother deploys to Afghanistan

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By Perry Jefferies, Blood Donor Recruiter, Fort Hood, TX



SGT Kenneth Medina, donating blood at Robertson Blood Center at Fort Hood, TX.

Sergeant Kenneth Medina is a regular blood donor and, during a tour of duty at Fort Hood, Texas, became an Armed Services Blood Program (ASBP) blood donor. By donating blood at the Robertson Blood Center at Fort Hood, Sergeant Medina contributed to the lifeline that is anchored at Armed Services Blood Centers and stretches to the battlefields in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Sergeant Medina, from Hartford, Connecticut, is spending two weeks training at Fort Hood with the 947th Forward Surgical Team. The 947th is a Reserve unit based in

Connecticut that received acclaim for a tour in Afghanistan in 2007. Asked if they were on active duty, Medina replied that the part time unit stayed so busy, members referred to operations as “reactive duty.” Forward Surgical Teams (FST) are key to the Armed Services’ great record of battlefield care and innovation. By starting surgeries farther forward and quicker on the battlefield, lives and limbs are being saved at a record pace.

This combination of action and medical care is important to Sergeant Medina. Always interested in medical arts and health care, he joined the Army Reserve soon after high school graduation as a Combat Medic. He sought additional training and earned his license as practical nurse (LPN) at Fort Lewis, Washington. Another Soldier in his unit encouraged him to request assignment to the 947th FST where his skill and energy would be challenged every day.

Sergeant Medina has another reason to be concerned with adequate blood supplies to the battlefield. His brother Efrain Medina is serving in Iraq right now as a field artillery observer. Both men were inspired to service by their mother Rebecca. Although legally blind, she raised both Efrain and Kenneth into the patriots they are today while working with special needs children for the city of Hartford. Kenneth remembers some of her struggles in a special light, saying that they faced challenges as a family and went everywhere together.

“It’s important to give blood because it is the right thing to do. As a healthcare professional I see the other side. Especially with my brother over there it is easy to see the right thing to do,” said Sergeant Medina. When he is not on active or “reactive” duty,

he works for the Hartford Police Department and intends to become a medic with the force. He is a great example of the Soldiers serving our nation at home and abroad.

Find out where you can donate blood or become an ASBP volunteer, by visiting www.militaryblood.dod.mil for scheduled blood drives and more information about the ASBP.